

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 01000 161738Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CU-02 SIL-01
LAB-04 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 EB-07
COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /094 W
-----161807Z 096165 /44

O R 161540Z JUN 77
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6280
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SF
SUBJECT: SITUATION REPORT FOR JUNE 16

SUMMARY: AS OF MID-AFTERNOON, THE ANNIVERSARY DAY OF LAST YEAR'S SOWETO RIOTS HAS PASSED WITH NO MAJOR DISTURBANCES REPORTED. NEWS REPORTS INDICATED 2 BOMB BLASTS ON RAILWAY LINES IN SOWETO DID LITTLE DAMAGE ALTHOUGH ONE POLICEMAN SLIGHTLY INJURED. ADMIST HEAVY POLICE SURVEILLANCE, BLACKS IN MOST URBAN AREAS STREAMED TO SCHOOL AND WORK THIS MORNING IN NEAR NORMAL NUMBERS. WORK BOYCOTT CALLS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN LARGEY IGNORED IN CAPE TOWN AND PRETORIA AND OBSERVED "UNEVENLY" IN JOHANNESBURG. AMONG SOWETO RESIDENTS THE BOYCOTT WAS ESTIMATED TO BE 60-80 PERC. EFFECTIVE WHILE IN EAST RAND TOWNSHIPS IT WAS VIRTUALLY NIL. POLICE ARE MUCH IN EVIDENCE IN THE TOWNSHIPS WHICH AT THIS MOMENT REMAIN CALM. END SUMMARY

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1. CAPE TOWN - MOST EMPLOYERS REPORTED VIRTUALLY NORMAL ATTENDANCE BY WORKERS. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE WAS ALSO NEAR NORMAL. A FEW ISOLATED INSTANCES OF STONING OF VEHICLES WERE REPORTED BUT NO MAJOR INCIDENTS. IN COROLED TONWSHIP OF ATHLONE, APPARENTLY RESPONDING TO PLEA BY ATHLONE COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION, MOST BUSINESSES CLOSED FOR THE DAY "AS A MARK OF RESPECT TO THOSE KILLED IN LAST YEAR'S

UNREST." CAMPUS AT COLORED UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE REPORTED QUIET WITH MANY STUDENTS HAVING LEFT IN ADVANCE OF NEXT WEEK'S BEGINNING OF WINTER BREAK. IN EASTERN CAPE, TOWNSHIPS WERE ALSO REPORTED QUIET. BLACK FORT HART UNIVERSITY WAS CLOSED THREE DAYS EARLY TO AVOID "POSSIBLE DISTURBANCES."

2. DURBAN - EXCEPT FOR CONTINUED POLICE SURVEILLANCE OF COMMUTERS FROM BLACK TOWNSHIPS, DURBAN WAS QUIET AND BUSINESS LIFE WAS NORMAL ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOWETO RIOTS. NO ONE AWARE OF ANY LOCAL CALLS OR A WORK BOYCOTT AND COMMUTER TRAINS AND BUSES FROM THE BLACK TOWNSHIPS CARRIED THE USUAL FULL LOADS OF WORKERS. NO FURTHER ARRESTS OR DETENTIONS WERE REPORTED. CHIEF BUTHELEZI WAS INDIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE JUNE 15 BOMB EXPLOSION ON THE UMLAZI-DURBAN LINE, STATING THAT "PURPOSELESS AND SPORADIC ACTION OF ANY KIND CAN ONLY SERVE TO RETARD OUR STRUGGLE", AND ADDING THAT HE DID NOT THINK VIOLENCE WAS THE PROPER WAY TO COMMEMORATE THE VICTIMS OF LAST YEAR'S DISTURBANCES. HE ALSO NOTED THAT EXPLOSION, HAD IT OCCURRED AT DIFFERENCE HOURS, WOULD ONLY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN KILLING OR INJURING FELLOW BLACKS "FOR NOTHING." BLACK SOCCER LEAGUES IN NATAL INTEND TO PLAY THEIR FULL SCHEDULE OF GAMES THIS WEEKEND, DESPITE REPORTED CANCELLATION OF GAMES BY BLACK SOCCER LEAGUES ELSEWHERE. ROBERT SISHI, HEAD OF THE KWAZULU SPORTS COUNCIL WHICH SUPERVISES THE BLACK LEAGUES IN NTALA, TOLD THE "WORLD" THAT NO SSRC REPRESENTATIVE HAD APPROACHED HIM TO ASK THAT THE SCHEDULE BE CANCELLED AS REPORTEDLY WAS BEING DONE ELSEWHERE.

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3. PRETORIA - EMBOFF TOOK EXTENSIVE TOUR OF PRETORIA AREA THIS MORNING TO GAUGE SITUATION. TOWNSHIPS, WHICH WERE NOT ENTERED, SEEMED CALM. ALL ENTRANCE ROADS HAD POLICE CHECK POINTS BUT VEHICLES WERE BEING STOPPED AT RANDOM AND ATMOSPHERE WAS CASUAL. THERE WAS UNUSUAL ACTIVITY AT POLICE STATIONS NEAR TOWNSHIPS, WITH SEEMINGLY INORDINATE NUMBER OF RIOT VEHICLES AND POLICE IN COMBAT FATIGUES PRESENT. FROM A DISTANCE, ACTIVITIES IN TOWNSHIPS SEEMED NORMAL. TRAIN STATIONS APPEARED TO BE OPERATING AS USUAL AND PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR MOVEMENT WAS NORMAL. IN PRETORIA CHECKS OF TAXI AND BUS RANKS AND TRAIN STATIONS SHOWED NOTHING OUT OF ORDINARY. MARKET AREAS IN CITY WERE OPERATING AND BUSY AS USUAL. NORMAL LABOR ACTIVITIES IN CITY SEEMED UNINTERRUPTED WITH MUNICIPAL WORKERS, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES ALL ON THE JOB. ALSO, EMBOFF SAW ALMOST NO INDICATION THAT PRETORIA TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS WERE ABIDING BY STUDENTS' CALL TO WEAR BLACK OR BLACK ARMBANDS TODAY. OVERALL IMPRESSION WAS ONE OF NORMALCY. OBVIOUSLY POLICE ON STAND-BY, BUT THEIR PRESENCE IN OR NEAR TOWNSHIPS UN-

OBTRUSIVE. THERE APPEARED TO BE NO SIGNIFICANT WORK
BOYCOTT.

4. JOHANNESBURG - AS OF EARLY AFTERNOON, SOWETO STILL
REPORTED QUIET AS LARGE POLICE PRESENCE PATROLS SOWETO. ONE
OBSERVER IS QUOTED AS SAYING HE HAS NEVER SEEN SO MANY POLICE
IN SOWETO BEFORE. ASSORTED SMALL INCIDENTS BUT PEOPLE
SEEM TO BE ACTING PRUDENTLY IN FACE OF MASSIVE DEMONSTRATION
OF FORCE. IN CONTRASTING STYLES, MINISTER OF JUSTICE KRUGER
WARNED STUDENTS NOT TO START ANYTHING WHILE POLICE CHIEF
VISSER APPEALED FOR CALM. POLICE ARE EQUIPPED WITH PLASTIC
SHIELDS, HELMETS, AND BATONS, ALTHOUGH SOME ARE ALSO
CARRYING RIFLES AND HAND-GUNS. SO FAR, POLICE HAVE USED
TEAR GAS AND "SNEEZE MACHINE," A TRUCK THAT SPRAYS TEAR GAS
AND TALCUM POWDER TO BREAK UP ANY DEMONSTRATIONS. POLICE
WERE PATROLLING TRAIN AND BUS STATIONS IN HEAVY NUMBERS TO
PREVENT INTIMIDATION OF WORKERS, ALTHOUGH POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION
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TIONS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MINIMIZED BY STUDENTS' REQUEST TO
STAY INDOORS UNTIL 10 A.M. AND LARGE SUPPORT SHOWN FOR BOYCOTT
CALL. MINISTER OF JUSTICE KRUGER HAS THREATENED TO BAN
SEVERAL COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES AND MEETINGS IN THE WHILE
COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF THEIR "INFLAMMATORY" NATURE. SPECIFICALLY, HE
WARNED BEYERS NAUDE, ALBIE POP, AND DRAKE TSHEKENG
NOT TO MAKE "POLITICAL SPEECHES" AT AN ANGLICAN VIGIL
SCHEDULED FOR ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL IN JOHANNESBURG. WORKER
BOYCOTT, ON THE BASIS OF CONGEN CHECKS, ESTIMATED AT 60
TO 80 PERCENT. EFFECTIVE ON THOSE WORKERS FROM SOWETO. EAST
RAND WORKERS APPARENTLY IGNORED BOYCOTT CALL COMPLETELY.
SEVERAL EXPLOSIONS ON RAIL LINE INTO SOWETO THIS MORNING
BUT LITTLE OR NO DAMAGE REPORTED AND SERVICE UNAFFECTED.
LAST MAJOR HURDLE TODAY WILL BE WORKERS RETURNING HOME.
IF POLICE PATROL BUS AND TRAIN TERMINALS AS HEAVILY AS THIS
MORNING, THERE PROBABLY WILL BE NO INCIDENTS AND BOYCOTT MAY
HAVE BEEN BROKEN FOR TOMORROW. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS, CIVIL DISORDERS
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Decapton Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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